DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 210 630 CS 006 373

AUTHOR Goodman, Kenneth S.; Goodman, Yetta M.
TITLE A Whole-Language, Comprehension-Centered Reading Program. Program in Language and Literacy Occasional Paper Number 1.
INSTITUTION Arizona Univ., Tucson. Coll. of Education.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Feb 81
NOTE 27p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Beginning Reading; Elementary Education; Holistic Evaluation; Program Descriptions; *Psycholinguistics; Reading Comprehension; *Reading Instruction; Reading Processes; *Reading Programs
IDENTIFIERS *Whole Language Approach

ABSTRACT

Intended for reading teachers and school administrators, this paper proposes a whole language, comprehension based approach to reading instruction that is rooted in the humanistic acceptance of the learner as problem solver and that builds on strengths and minimizes preoccupation with reading deficiency. Following an introduction and rationale for this holistic approach, the paper outlines the key principles of the approach relating to the reading process, teaching and learning, and instructional materials. The paper then examines the myths of reading readiness, controlled vocabulary, phonics, and mastery learning. The next section of the paper details the essentials of an in-school program that draws on the learning taking place outside school, beginning with preschool and progressing through beginning reading, developmental reading, and an alternative to remediation. The conclusion of the paper reexamines the strengths of a holistic reading program. (HTH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED210630

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

A Whole-Language, Comprehension-Centered Reading Program

Kenneth S. Goodman

Yetta M. Goodman

University of Arizona

A Position Paper

February, 1981 No. 1

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Kenneth S. Goodman

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Occasional Papers
Program in Language and Literacy
Arizona Center for Research and Development
College of Education
University of Arizona

Co-directors:
Kenneth S. Goodman
Yetta M. Goodman
402 Education, Bldg. 69
University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ 85721

This paper was commissioned by The National Institute of Education and is scheduled to appear in a forthcoming publication. The views expressed however, are only those of the authors.

Not to be reproduced without permission of the author or directors of the Program in Language and Literacy.

CS206373

Statement of Purpose

This series of working papers will provide a report of our current thinking and make available the work of our program to those who may be interested. It is our intent to stimulate an on-going dialogue with other professionals who share similar interests in educational theory and practice. We welcome responses from readers. Comments may be directed to the author of the paper or to the directors of the program.

Some but not all of the papers may appear in other publications in modified form. We are making this publication available at cost.

A WHOLE-LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION-CENTERED VIEW OF READING DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

John Dewey said education must start where the learner is, and help the learner to expand from there. His view of education placed the child at the center of problem solving experiences.

A whole-language comprehension approach to developing reading, literacy, and all learning for that matter, is rooted in this positive, humanistic acceptance of the learner. It builds on strength and minimizes preoccupation with deficiency. But this approach is also rooted in science. Research has demonstrated the tremendous language learning strength universally present among people of all backgrounds, including those who already speak two languages when they come to school and those whose home dialect is different from the teacher's. In the whole-language, comprehension-centered method literacy - reading and writing - is regarded as a natural extension of human language development. It is based on modern research and theory of language development, language processes, and language learning including research on reading and writing.

It is also based on a cognitive psychology view of learning and the relationships of language, thinking and learning including views of perception, cognition, schema theory and concept development. It involves a psycho-socio-linguistic view of language functioning and learning relating the individual to a socio-cultural view of language development and function. Our pedagogy is rooted in a child-centered functional view tracing itself to Dewey,

Kilpatrick, Counts, Childs.

The research base supports this view which is: a) positive, building on existing strengths of the learner, b) relevant, expanding on existing experiences of children within their own cultures, c) transactional, treating the learners as active participants, d) personalized, and e) dynamic and process oriented.

Key Principles of a Whole-Language View

The holistic approach is based on the following key principles drawn from these scientific and humanistic bases.

Principles relating to the reading process:

1. Meaning is constructed during listening and reading. The reader builds meaning drawing on prior learning and experience while interacting with the text.
2. Reading is a process of prediction, selection, confirmation and self-correction. Effective reading produces coherent meaning. Efficient reading uses the least amount of energy and input necessary.
3. Three systems interact in language: grapho-phonic, syntactic, semantic. These can not usefully be separated for instruction without creating non-linguistic abstractions and nonsense.
4. Comprehension of meaning is always the goal of reading and listening.
5. Expression of meaning is always the goal of writing and speaking.
6. What the reader/listener understands beforehand strongly influences what is comprehended during reading/listening.

Principles of teaching and learning:

7. Learning in school and out of school are not different. School programs must expand on existing learning and utilize intrinsic

motivations. This means learning must be functional, it means literacy is an extension of natural language learning.

8. Development of function precedes and motivates development of form.
9. Language development builds expression and comprehension strategies during functional meaningful relevant language use. This means, among other things, that: a) There is no sequence in which "skills" develop and b) There is no hierarchy of language skills.
10. Children develop abilities in response to personal - social needs. Therefore, they've already made strong beginnings in developing literacy before any contact with schools.
11. There is no one-to-one correspondence between teaching and learning. The teacher motivates, arranges the environment, monitors development, provides relevant appropriate materials, and provides timely experiences to facilitate learning. Ultimately, it is the learner's decision to extract what is most meaningful to be learned from that environment.
12. Though teachers may monitor development of strategies, learners need to focus on communication of meaning. That means there is a double agenda in the classroom: the learners focus on use, the teachers focus on use and development.
13. Risk taking is a necessary part of all language learning. Developing readers must be encouraged to predict and guess as they move toward meaning. An atmosphere must be created in which mistakes are seen as a necessary part of development.

Principles for instructional materials:

14. Materials to be read in school must, from the very beginning, have all the characteristics of real functional language. They must be whole texts that are meaningful and relevant.

15. Fragmented exercises which turn real language into abstract bits and pieces have no place in this program.

16. Materials will be hard or easy in relationship to how predictable they are.

17. During instruction attention must shift away from words and toward comprehension of meaning.

The holistic method shows continuous respect for both language and learner.

Focus is always on meaning. The most important question is: How is this contributing to comprehension? Learners at all stages are urged to constantly ask themselves,"Does this make sense to me?" They learn to judge their own success by what makes sense and to reject reading nonsense.

Motivation is intrinsic: No M & M's to reward effort or success are needed or permitted. Such reward distorts the purpose for reading. Relevant meaning is reading's own reward and the only appropriate one. When language is functional, motivation to learn is high and children know when they are successful since they have met their own needs. Extrinsic rewards can sugarcoat dysfunctional learning. At best the learner comes to rely on someone else's judgement that what has been learned is good.

Holistic instruction begins where it ends, with whole language - mundane, useful, relevant, functional language - and moves toward the full range of written language including literature in all its variety.

The language of the bilingual child or the child whose dialect is of a different variety than the teacher's is accepted and expanded upon to develop flexibility in language use. The school expands on whatever base of language or languages a given learner brings to school. In the case of the bilingual learner, the objective becomes biliteracy, the ability to read and write both languages.

In this method, there are no pre-reading skills, no reading readiness. Instead, we expect learning to go from whole to part, from general to specific, from familiar to unfamiliar, from vague to precise, from gross to fine, from highly contextualized to more abstract. That means that we expect children to read familiar, meaningful wholes first. We expect that they will read easily predictable materials that draw on concepts and experiences they already have. These may be signs, cereal boxes, or books. As they acquire a repetoire of such known wholes they begin to be able to read familiar words and phrases in new wholes and eventually they'll be able to handle unfamiliar parts in familiar uses anywhere. In this method we see no sequence of skills or language units and certainly no hierarchy for the ordering of instruction in skills or language units. Beginners must use the same information as proficient readers to make sense of print. Development is a matter of getting the process together: learning to use, in the context of reading real language, just enough print, language structure, and meaning and keeping it all in proper perspective.

We build comprehension strategies, ways of using information to construct meaning, that will help students become both efficient and effective in using this process. Readers, as they develop their strategies, must become more flexible as they move through broader ranges of materials with content further removed from their own direct experiences. We try to help readers to use reading to learn -- to extend and acquire concepts as we try to avoid misusing reading in instruction by expecting textbooks to carry the burden of teaching.

Most crucial in the holistic method is the new role of an enlightened teacher who serves as guide, facilitator, and kid-watcher. Such a teacher can capitalize on the language competence and language learning ability of children and help make literacy an extension of their natural language learning.

Before we present the specifics of our program we need to break some icons.

Reading readiness: this is a myth derived from skill hierarchies and a

lack of understanding of human language development and use. It uses non-language activities and abstractions.

Our view: readiness is intrinsic when language is real. Children are ready when they see need and have confidence in themselves. By carefully building on what children already know we assure their readiness.

Controlled vocabulary: this is a mistake that grew out of the misconception of language as a set of words and learning to read as learning words.

Our view: Language self-controls vocabulary. In any text, of the 25 most common words, half will be function words (a, the, is, was, in, it, etc.) but the other half will be words closely related to story content. Stories have three kinds of vocabulary: a) a lot of incidental words, b) a small number of concept carrying words, and c) very few crucial words.

Learning to read is not learning to recognize words; it is learning to make sense of texts. **Predictability, not simple repetition,** builds vocabulary.

Phalse Phonic Phables: phonics as a reading method is a kind of flat-earth view of reading. It cling to simplistic and sometimes erroneous views of language phenomena in spite of contradictory information from science. Some examples are of the "when two vowels go walking" type. They are only true for a limited number of cases with too many important exceptions. The rule, if accepted, will get readers in trouble. Other examples ignore dialect differences. What is the vowel sound in these words: frog, fog, log, bog, dog, smog, cog, hog, jog? It will not serve all speakers equally well to be taught that it's a "short o". In still other cases, phonics simply falls short. It can't explain the shifts in a series of related words like site, situate, situation, where the spelling stays t even though the sound shifts as affixes are added.

But even if we produced a more scientific phonics it would not adequately form a method of teaching reading. Phonics as a method has children recode

letters to sounds. The assumption is that then the children can "blend" the sounds and produce meaningful language. But reading doesn't work that way. The reader is seeking meaning not sounds or words. Phonics treats every letter as equally important.

Our view: readers must be selective and use only as much of the print as necessary to predict the meaning and confirm their predictions. We believe that readers do form phonics rules for relating print to speech as they are reading real meaningful texts. But these self-developed rules are not overlearned and artificial as they would be if they were imposed by a structured reading program.

The Mastery Myth: This is a modern version of an old abandoned idea that learning anything is a matter of breaking the whole up into small pieces, arranging them in a linear sequence and then making sure that each piece is thoroughly learned before the learners are permitted to go on to the next. The simplicity of this idea is seductive. But chopping language into pieces turns it into abstractions which must then be put back together by the learners into a meaningful whole. Furthermore, the sequencing is always arbitrary and artificial. Specificity is glorified. Indeed each small piece, given sufficient practice, may be learnable. But learning to read is not something that happens a piece at a time.

Our view: In reading,as in learning to talk, language must all be there all the time. Reading is learned in the process of using it. That's the way humans learn language.

Implementation in a School Program

Children do not confine their learning to school. So much of their literacy development happens before they enter school and outside of school. What follows is an outlining of the essentials of the in-school program that

is consistent with our premises and which draws on the learning taking place outside of school.

A holistic program provides integration of reading and writing with other language arts and with content of the curriculum. There is no isolation of skills for instruction. There is no isolation of processes from their use. Our central principle is that language is learned best when the learner's focus is on its communicative use.

For purpose of discussion we'll discuss the Whole-language, comprehension centered program under 4 headings: Reading in Pre-Schools, Beginning Reading, Developmental Reading, and Revaluing. It will become obvious that this is a continuum with principles, objectives, activities and materials common for all.

Reading in the pre-school: The literacy objectives of pre-schools are: 1) to encourage what's already happening, that is to build on the developing awareness of functions of print, environmental reading, informational reading; 2) to create a literate environment in the classroom, one in which functional print is everywhere; 3) to expand the learner's sense of books and how to handle them; 4) to expand their sense of style and form of written language by hearing it read to them. We focus on experience, awareness, and intrinsic motivation.

An important aspect of any pre-school program is communication to parents to help them be aware of opportunities for developing literacy.
Some specific pre-school activities include: Teachers use and call attention to written language; telling children what things say, encouraging them to say what they think something says; to be print aware.

The children take walks around the neighborhood and school seeking environmental print. The teacher asks, "What do you think it says?" Children's names are used; charts and topical bulletin boards are created by the children and the teacher. Teachers, aides, older kids, and parents read to/with kids in small groups and one-to-one in laps. Children are encouraged to follow

and read along. The room has lots of books; response books; wordless books. There are centers: Listening -- children follow books while listening to records or tapes; and Writing -- children write grocery lists, notes, picture captions. Kids are encouraged to play at reading and writing and materials for both are available. The value of literacy is highlighted during role playing experiences as children cook, go to store corners, or dress-up clothes centers.

Beginning Reading: Since we believe children have made a strong beginning in developing awareness of print and of its functions well before first grade, the term beginning reading refers only to the fact that children will be beginning a concerted program to help them become fully functional readers.

Everything we've said about attention to literacy in the pre-school still applies but now it is a matter of more explicit concern. The program builds pride and confidence of the children in their language(s) and their growing literacy. It expands on this base building control of form in the context of functional use. The program builds from whole to part, encouraging school beginners to be self-reliant risk-takers. In this program we teach for strategies not specifics: meaning seeking, predicting, sampling, confirming, self-correcting. We cultivate the alphabetic principle not specifics of phonics. We use all cues to predict meaning from language not just words. We teach for inferencing (the psycholinguistic guessing game); the teacher is a monitor and facilitator.

Here are some specifics of a beginning reading program. As in the pre-school, the classroom itself is a highly literate environment in which functional, meaningful relevant written language is everywhere. The print is created by the pupils and the teacher as they label their centers and the things they create such as charts for rules, attendance and jobs; bulletin boards for autobiographies of the children in the class written and read by the kids. There are stores with boxes, cartons, and signs, as well as classroom post offices where each child has a box for receiving "mail" and messages.

A variety of whole language techniques are used. Language experience in which pupils dictate individually or in groups or write by themselves, stories based on their own experiences. These are recorded on charts or in books bound by pupils at a publishing center in the room. Read-along activities where pupils follow a text while they listen to a record of someone reading. Shared book experience in which teacher and pupils read, together, an enlarged version of a favorite book or children's song or rhyme. Assisted reading where pupils read along with a teacher or aide to provide just enough support to keep the reader going.

There are also many predictable books in the classes. These books are called predictable because they deal with familiar content in familiar language. They have simple, sometimes repetitious, structures where it's easy for children to get a sense of where the book is going and predict what comes next.

The teacher of beginners monitors their development through close observation but the children are growing into readers; they are not carefully taken into it skill by skill.

Developmental Reading

The part of a reading program which takes pupils who've made some beginning at reading and helps them to grow as readers to expand on the base they have in effectiveness and efficiency is called a <u>developmental reading</u> program. The program adheres closely to the principle that pupils must, at all stages be reading comprehensible texts as they develop. No materials with artificial language are acceptable. We build the learners' level of confidence and encourage risk taking by continually involving pupils in self-selecting materials they want to read and in trying to comprehend whatever they want to read. We expand their flexibility, help them develop and broaden their taste,

and work with them to build strong comprehension strategies.

There are three focal points in developing a holistic program: a) Stimulating lots of reading; b) Creating a climate which accepts and encourages risk taking; and c) Keeping the focus on meaning: ours as teachers and the pupils'. These three points are the absolute minimum for the program. If they are not present no matter how many specific activities that we've mentioned are used, the program will not be successful.

Since the major means of building proficiency is reading itself, plenty of time is provided for reading. Since language is learned best when it is self-motivated, self-selection is encouraged. Self-selection also helps in developing taste and flexibility. Pupils are helped to broaden the scope and range of their reading and to build specific strategies which will be helpful with different kinds of texts.

The belief in a dichotomy between learning to read and reading to learn is unfortunate and inconsistent with a holistic program. Children learn language and improve their control of language processes incidentally as they seek to understand what is being said, as they seek to comprehend. They don't learn to read for the sake of learning to read. Meaning is both input and output from reading. Self-motivation is vital because wanting to comprehend is a necessary condition of comprehending.

The conceptual load of materials can be controlled. They can be written with conscious consideration of the experiences, concepts, and interests of the intended audience. But pupils will work hard and extend themselves to understand texts which are important to them. Pupils aren't passive. They must be active in their own learning and interactive with the texts they read.

At the same time, we need to be aware of the limits of reading in learning. Subject area textbooks are limited resources to be used as one part of a total curriculum. In a holistic program teachers are not abusing and

misusing texts by equating them with the curriculum and making pupils totally dependent on reading textbooks for learning.

In our program, we offer patience and progress toward development of comprehension strategies instead of drill on skills. Comprehension strategies focus on use of graphic, syntactic and meaning cues in the context of real whole language. In strategy lessons, we expand on strengths and help pupils build strategies of sampling, predicting, confirming, and correcting by using meaningful passages that offer many unambiguous opportunities to use the strategies.

Here's an example: we note that pupils in reading are sometimes substituting what for that and that for what. As we pay closer attention, we find they also are doing this with when/then and where/there. Rather than isolating these for drill or assuming they indicate a phonics problem, we determine that these substitutions tend to occur where either word could make some sense and fit grammatically. So we find or write a meaningful passage in which each time one of these words is used it is the only one that can fit. Our purpose in having the pupils read the passage is to help them use and strengthen self-correction strategies. But we are also helping them to make better predictions. At no time do we explicitly call their attention to these words in isolation. That would strengthen an association between the words.

Here are some specifics of a developmental reading program. There must be lots of time spent reading. Time is provided for periods of sustained silent reading of self-selected books. There are plenty of books with a wide range of topics and difficulty available. In addition to trade books and school textbooks the program also includes TV guides, newspapers, environmental reading (signs, boxes, ads, etc.), and paperbacks of all kinds. The program employs reading materials from libraries, homes, the community, hobbies,

crafts, informational sources. It cultivates reading in the pursuit of personal interest. Students are helped to understand their own cultural background by having available many materials which represent the multi-lingual, multi-dialectal and multi-cultural nature of our society.

In this program particular concern is given to the reading of content materials in math, science, social studies, and work at the development of special strategies for reading special materials.

Here, for example, is a general strategy for reading math problems.

Pupils are encouraged to read three times:

1. To decide what information is being sought.
2. To lay out equations and computations.
3. To get specific information and check against the problem.

Each successive reading employs different strategies for different purposes.

Teachers have a general approach to planning for reading development in each content field. First, they review the general and special uses of reading in the area. Then, they consider what new kinds of texts pupils will encounter: ie. maps, charts, recipes, directions, scripts. Next, they decide what strategies, background knowledge and resources are needed. Determining where the pupils are in these needs comes next. Such careful planning, organizing, and evaluating makes it possible to facilitate the pupils' interaction with the texts so that strategies are built and comprehension strengthened.

Revaluing: Our Alternative to Remediation

Troubled readers, those who are not effective, are in conflict with themselves. They are in a true sense their own worst enemies. They're trying to make sense out of what they read but they're also trying to do it by the numbers, to

remember and use every skill they've been taught. They're so busy attacking words that they lose confidence in themselves as language users. They mistrust their own language strategies and become dependent on teachers to tell them what to do as they read. They are very reluctant to take risks. Their confidence level is quite low.

Troubled readers believe that there are two kinds of readers, good and bad. And they believe they're bad readers. Good readers, in their view, never have problems. They believe that the subskills work for good readers. So these pupils suffer from the "next-word" syndrome. Everytime they come to a word that's unfamiliar they take it as proof that they're bad readers. Good readers, they think, always know the next word. They treat all words as being of equal importance so they spend as much time trying to sound out a name as they do an important concept carrying word. They give up on meaning: they don't expect things to make sense and reading becomes the tedious task of getting as near to as many words as possible.

These readers are not devoid of strengths. But the strengths are neutralized by a lack of self-confidence, overuse of isolated skills, and an inability to differentiate legitimate use of comprehending strategies from cheating. They believe that if they get to meaning without systematic use of skills, they've somehow been cheating. Remedial programs that concentrate on areas of weakness only serve to aggravate the problems. These pupils must be patiently helped to revalue the reading process and revalue themselves as learners and readers.

The focus in a holistic program on revaluing helps pupils to build risk-taking confidence and to become aware that they have personal choices and alternatives. We build toward the readers' sense of their own strengths. We help them to value what they can do and not be defeated by what they can't do, to trust themselves and their linguistic intuitions. We help them to self-evaluate on the basis of meaning.

The instruction seeks to move them away from the next word syndrome and total reliance on phonics and to help them build meaning seeking strategies. They have to come to accept their own miscues as legitimate and to find satisfaction in getting sense from what they're reading.

Here are specifics of a Revaluing Program. There should be lots of whole language meaningful reading and lots of non-pressuring support. Patience is a key word in working with troubled readers.

A variety of language experience activities are useful at any age. The pupil is encouraged to dictate an account of an event, personal experience, or activity to a teacher or aide. That's typed or written on a chart which becomes material for the pupil to read. This can be read together by teacher and pupil and then by the pupil alone.

Pupils can also be encouraged to select from newspapers, magazines, or books articles that deal with their own avocational interests. If the pupil has high interest and strong background these are likely to be predictable and therefore easy to read for the particular pupils. Teachers can also have available a large number of materials of high interest and great relevance to the learners. Predictability of meaning is the crucial factor.

In a holistic program we keep the focus on meaning, use the most meaningful materials we can find and try to remember that it takes time for pupils to revalue themselves and reading. We expect some setbacks and considerable trauma as the pupils get control of their conflict with themselves. But we keep demonstrating to pupils that getting the gist of what they're reading is the main goal.

It is even more important than with successful pupils that readers in trouble have the support at all times of a full, meaningful real language text. Almost invariably they've been subjected to an increasingly meaningless set of skill drills which have turned reading into fractionated abstractions. We try to help them put themselves and reading back together.

Moving to a Whole Language Approach From a Basal Reader-Centered Program

The most likely common denominator in contemporary classrooms is one or more basal readers. Teachers and schools wanting to shift toward a whole language comprehension centered approach may find the most practical means to do so is to modify their use of the available basal readers. In most cases, except where the basal is too tightly structured and skill based, this can be accomplished. Use of the manual must be modified. The teacher should read it to see how the elements in the basic program are planned to be used. But then the teacher should develop a set of comprehension-centered criteria for deciding which advice in the manual is worth following, which activities worth including, which selections useful. Control shifts in this process from the manual to the teacher.

The basal becomes a resource among many in the classroom. In most cases, the stories and other selections beyond the primers and pre-primers are reasonably good in modern basals. They draw on well-written children's literature. They've lost a lot of the artificial quality and have incorporated a lot more ethnic and cultural diversity than the earlier basal readers that were strongly oriented toward an idealized suburban middle class. Many of the stories can be used in a whole-language program.

Criteria to select which stories to use include the following: 1) Language must be natural and not fragmented or artificially controlled; 2) Predictability of language forms and content should be reasonably high; 3) Content should be relevant and interesting to the pupils; and 4) Illustrations should support but not replace the language of the text.

In a holistic program all pupils don't have to read the same stories in the same order. No publisher ever claimed the selections are perfectly sequenced in order of difficulty. Some selections may be of little interest to some pupils, some may be irrelevant to some populations, some may be better

used earlier than others. Pupils may read some stories and discuss them with others or they may read them as they become interested in them.

The key is to retain only those parts of the basals which suit the criteria of our whole-language meaning-centered program. Only a few selected skill lessons and parts of the workbooks screened through the criteria listed to select stories will prove useful. An occasional item that contains a meaningful passage of some length, that focuses on comprehending, that involves content relevant to the pupils may be adaptable as a strategy lesson.

In this adaptation, the basal materials will be treated as resources which serve the curriculum but do not dominate or become the curriculum.

Some commercial programs have been designed with more focus on whole language and meaning than others: Bill Martin's Sounds of Language (Holt), Reading Unlimited (Scott, Foresman), Breakthrough to Literacy (Bowmar in the U.S.), and Van Allen's Language Experience In Reading (Encyclopedia Brittanica) are examples. In addition, there are a number of publishers that offer paperback book packages, read-along libraries with records or tapes, topical newspapers (Scholastic, Weekly Reader) and other materials compatible with our program. Scholastic now provides packs of paperback books keyed to extending themes in specific basal readers. Resourceful teachers can even take discarded basals and cut them apart to place the stories that they know kids like and which meet the criteria of being whole, real, meaningful language in folders or bindings titled and illustrated by children.

Children in the program are introduced to libraries early and teachers draw heavily on public and school libraries to keep a large variety of self-chosen materials in the pupils' hands. Teachers build a classroom library that includes books pupils have written themselves. Having plenty for the kids to read is vital to our program and it helps teachers to ease away from keeping pupils occupied with skill drills and workbook pages.

We accept the reality that teachers need to accommodate new ideas gradually and to plan for a transition from what they've done in the past to a new program consistent with new criteria. In this transition, the teacher can keep the best of the old, eliminate that which conflicts with the new criteria, and integrate new concepts with the old in a new perspective. What makes this process work is a developing belief in the strengths of pupils and a concerted attempt on the part of the teacher to shift from a deficiency view to a positive view that accepts and builds on pupil strengths.

Just as the willingness to take risks is essential for pupils becoming literate, it is also essential for teachers. Nothing is more important in this program than informed teachers who understand language and who care about kids. They are kid watchers who know how to observe and monitor the progress pupils are making in developing literacy. They observe pupils using language, reading and writing, and informally apply their knowledge of language development to achieve an understanding of the pupils' strengths and needs.

Teachers evaluate this program on the basis of looking for evidence of the use of comprehension strategies. They watch for signs of effective, efficient use of sampling, predicting, confirming and self-correcting. They watch for evidence that readers are trying to make sense of written language.

Evaluation of reading development must include self-evaluation. Teachers involve children through individual conferencing in self-evaluation and planning for continued reading development. The readers should be continuously asking themselves, "Does this make sense?" The most important question a teacher can ask to assist in this process is, "Did that make sense to you?" The self-corrections pupils make of their oral reading miscues, unexpected responses, are strong indications of their self-monitoring for meaning. If pupils are correcting miscues which reflect meaning loss and not correcting miscues which don't, then they're showing concern for meaning.

We believe that there is little useful information in a published group test administered in half an hour that a teacher can't obtain from directly monitoring the reading of pupils and interacting with them daily. But this requires that teachers know a lot about the pupils and that they know a lot about how reading works and how it's learned.

Miscue analysis is a useful means of monitoring pupils' oral reading. It is a window on each pupil's use of the reading process and it reveals developing strengths as well as plateaus and hang-ups. In some instances, teachers use miscue analysis to get a full profile of a pupil. But in most cases, the teachers use the analysis informally to get a sense of where pupils are and where they're going. What's important is that teachers, as skilled professional observers, are continually engaged in evaluation while they interact with pupils.

Conclusion

School districts will not find this an easy program to put into effect if the focus of their teachers, reading programs, and administrators is on subskill teaching to raise test scores. It has been proved often that what is taught by rote can be retrieved for short term specific purposes. Certainly teaching directly the word attack skills which will appear on a standardized test will raise the scores on that test at least in primary grades where tests heavily weigh such subskills. However, these test scores do not really show the development of effective reading proficiency. Some students learn to read despite low test scores. Some overcome skill instruction and learn to read but also learn to hate reading because it is a tedious process. Others never catch on to what reading is really all about. They keep applying skills and getting no sense. Reading remains an instructional activity for the latter group and never a pleasurable, useful, personal experience. The group of people who do

learn to read and enjoy it have high and low reading test scores. They develop reading strategies on their own often without benefit of instruction which could help them develop flexibility in reading.

Learning to read is a natural process. It develops in a literate society in environments where reading becomes meaningful and functional in all the learning experiences in and out of school. If administrators and teachers can accept such a positive view then developing a whole language comprehension-centered program is easy. Such teachers build on what they know about language and learning to read. They organize an environment in which reading is used by students to learn about significant aspects of the total human experience. Such a program is supported by principals and parents who have respect for teachers as professionals and children as learners.

For them, reading is not separate from other learning. It becomes an integral part of all the learning experiences students have during their school day. Reading becomes a tool to gain knowledge, to participate vicariously in the experiences of others, to question the views and statements of others. As the focus of teaching reading shifts from a highly directed structural program to a program where reading is always a means to an end, always one part of a whole language, comprehension-centered curriculum, reading takes its proper place. Students must see reading as being valued in the community which is important to them. They must see reading as significant to their own lives. This can be accomplished when reading is a means to more significant experiences. It is in such a setting that reading is developed naturally.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allen, Roach Van and Claryee Allen. Language Experience Activities. Boston: Hougnton Mifflin, 1976.

Britton, James. Language and Learning. Miami, Florida: University of Miami Press, 1970.

Goodman, Kenneth S, and Yetta M. Goodman. "Learning to Read is Natural" in Theory and Practice of Early Reading Vol.1, Lauren B. Resnik and Phyllis A. Weaver (eds.). Hillsdale, N.J., Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1979.

Goodman, Kenneth, Yetta Goodman, and Barbara Flores. Reading in the Bilingual Classroom: Literacy and Biliteracy. Virginia: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, 1979.

Goodman, Yetta, and Carolyn Burke. Reading Strategies: Focus on Comprehension. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980.

Goodman, Yetta M. "The Roots of Literacy" in Claremont Reading Conference; Forty-fourth Yearbook, Malcolm P. Douglass (ed.). Claremont, California, The Claremont Reading Conference, 1980.

Goodman, Yetta. "Kid-Watching: An Alternative to Testing", National Elementary Principal, Vol. 57, No. 4, June, 1978, pp. 41-45.

Goodman, Yetta and Dorothy J. Watson. "A Reading Program to Live With: Focus on Comprehension". Language Arts, Nov. - Dec. 1977. pp. 868-879.

Hittleman, Daniel R. Developmental Reading: A Psycholinguistic Perspective. Skokie, IL: Rand McNally, 1978.

Holdaway, Don. The Foundations of Literacy. Sydney: Ashton Scholastic, 1979.

Huck, Charlotte. Children's Literature in the Elementary School. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968.

Lee, Dorris M., and Joseph B. Rubin. Children and Language/ Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1979.

Martin, Bill. Teacher's Editions: Sounds of Language Readers. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972, 1974.

Moffett, James. A Student-Centered Language Arts Curriculum, Grades K-13: A Handbook for Teachers. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973.

Smith, E. Brooks, Kenneth S. Goodman, and Robert Meredith. Language and Thinking in School, second edition, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976.

Smith, Frank. Reading Without Nonsense. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1979.

Taylor, Joy. Organizing the Open Classroom: A Teacher's Guide to the Integrated Day. New York: Schocken, 1972.

Tway, Eileen (ed). Reading Ladders for Human Relations. Urbana, IL: ERIC Clearing House and National Council of Teachers of English, in press.

Weaver, Constance. Psycholinguistics and Reading: From Process to Practice. Cambridge, MA: Winthrop Publishers, Inc., 1980.

Williams, Frederick, Robert Hopper, and Diana S. Natalicio. The Sounds of Children. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977.

(See professional journals such as Language Arts and English Journal, published by National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois.)

Occasional Papers

Program in Language and Literacy
Arizona Center for Research and Development
402 Education, Bldg. 69
College of Education
University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ 85721

Price per copy: $ 2.50 each
plus .50 mailing for each order
Payable to Program in Language and
Literacy, University of Arizona

No. 1: Goodman, K.S. and Goodman, Y.M. A Whole-Language Comprehension Centered View of Reading Development. A position paper, February, 1981.

No. 2: Goodman, K.S. and Gollasch, F.V. Word Omissions in Reading: Deliberate and Non-Deliberate. A research report, March, 1981.

No. 3: Altwerger, B. and Goodman, K.S. Studying Text Difficulty Through Miscue Analysis. A research report, in press.

No. 4: Goodman, Y.M. and Altwerger, B. A Study of Literacy in Preschool Children. A research report, in press.

PROGRAM IN LANGUAGE AND LITERACY
ARIZONA CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

The Program in Language and Literacy is an innovative effort to provide a center for a variety of activities dedicated to better knowledge of development in language and literacy and more effective school practice. The program is concerned with language processes as well as learning and teaching of language.

Activities of the program have several main concentrations:

- Research on oral and written language -
  - on development of oral and written language.
  - on teaching for effective use of oral and written language.
  - on curriculum for language growth and use.
  - on bilingual, bicultural, biliterate language development, language instruction.
  - on issues of adult basic literacy.
- Theory development in oral and written language processes.
- Acquisition and instruction of oral and written language processes.
- Development of curriculum and methodology for effective monolingual and bilingual school programs.
- Support for language and literacy components of pre-service teacher education programs.
- In-service programs to help teachers, curriculum workers, and school administrators to achieve more effective programs in language and literacy.
- Consultation to school systems and other agencies to plan and evaluate more effective programs in language and literacy.
- Graduate courses, seminars, minors and combined majors in educational linguistics to help educators become more effective as teachers, curriculum workers material developers and teacher educators.
- Conferences, workshops, symposia to provide dialogue among researchers, disseminators and practitioners.
- Publications including working papers, position papers and research reports.

The program focuses on written language. Written language is a receptive and productive process in a literate society where people have the alternative of using oral language in face-to-face situations or written language over time and space.

The program is cross-disciplinary. It draws on a wide variety of bases-sociology, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and areas of psychology-so that we can understand the learning of language and cognition and see the relationship of thought and language. We draw from other disciplines as well on neurology, physiology, and of course pedagogy, the study of education itself. The Program in Language and Literacy is a program in educational linguistics.

Staff:

Dr. Kenneth S. and Yetta M. Goodman, Co-directors
Faculty, Elementary Education, University of Arizona, Tucson

Lois Bird, Research Assistant, Series Editor
Claudia Dybdahl, Research Assistant
Jane Disinger, Research Assistant
Judith Enz, Associate
Suzanne Gespass, Research Assistant
Myna Haussler, Research Assistant
Jay Walker, Research Assistant
John Woodley, Research Assistant
Diane Barajas, Secretary